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ABSTRACT

An evaluation was conducted to determine the characteristics and attitudes of students in attendance at the University of Maryland's Non-Technical Career Convocation that was attended by 70 employers interested in recruiting non-technical majors. A total of 296 students representing all classes and colleges in the non-technical areas were surveyed. Most of these students came to the Convocation to find out about career opportunities and viewed the Convocation as generally worthwhile. Students thought the Convocation's most attractive feature was its informality and its least attractive features were its limited representation and physical arrangement. Fifty-four percent of the respondents expressed some degree of vocational uncertainty. This implies that these respondents were primarily interested in a survey of occupational fields, while 46 percent of the respondents were more interested in specific information regarding their chosen occupational field. Future convocations should therefore be designed to consider both the general and specific types of occupational information that students request from recruiters. Survey questions and responses are appended. (Author/SW)

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EVALUATION OF THE NON-TECHNICAL CAREER CONVOCATION SPRING, 1970

Isabel Kulick*

Research Report # 9-70

* Placement and Credentials Service

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine the characteristics and attitudes of students in attendance at the Non-Technical Career Convocation. Participating in this Convocation were 70 employers interested in recruiting non-technical majors. 296 students representing all classes and colleges in the non-technical areas were surveyed. It was learned that most of these students came to the Convocation to find out about career opportunities and viewed the Convocation as generally worthwhile. Students thought the Convocation's most attractive feature was its informality and its least attractive features were its limited representation and physical arrangement. 54 percent of the respondents expressed some degree of vocational uncertainty. This implies that these respondents were primarily interested in a survey of occupational fields, while 46 percent of the respondents were more interested in specific information regarding their chosen occupational field. Future convocations should therefore be designed to consider both the general and specific types of occupational information that students request from recruiters.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, most programs dealing with career opportunities have been a composite of technical and non-technical areas. Quite often these programs have tended to give more consideration to the student in the technical disciplines. In response to this tendency, the Placement and Credentials Services developed a Career Convocation specifically designated for those students in the non-technical major fields.

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the characteristics and attitudes of students who were in attendance at the Non-Technical Career Convocation.

The first Non-Technical Career Convocation was held at Cole Field House between 3:00 P.M. and 8:00 P.M. on February 17, 1970. This Spring convocation was the follow-up of the Technical Career Convocation held in the Fall, 1969. The non-technical disciplines that were represented included humanities, social and behavioral sciences, business and public administration, home economics, recreation, physical education and library science.

There were 70 participating employers, coming from a variety of public and private offices. Some of these were employers who were specifically interested in recruiting for summer employment.

PROCEDURES

Sample

From 3:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. at attempt was made to sample every fifth student upon leaving the Convocation from all exits of the Fieldhouse. When it was observed that a small number of students was being sampled, a change in sampling procedure was made. A total of 39 surveys were completed during this time period. From 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. the survey was distributed to everyone upon leaving the main exit of the Fieldhouse. A total of 257 surveys were completed during this time period.

Survey

The survey consisted of 12 items supplying the following five types of information:

1. demographic data
2. student attitudes about the convocation
3. student participant behavior at convocation
4. career planning behavior and certainty of vocational goals
5. student use of Placement Services

Question 12 of the survey concerning certainty of vocational goals is the same as Question 18 of the University Student Census. (See Appendix for copy of survey)

RESULTS

The total respondents in sample were 296. The respondents were primarily male with greatest representation from the College of B.P.A. and secondly from A & S.

COLLEGE	# OF RESPONDENTS
Arts & Sciences	105
Agriculture	7
BPA	126
Education	35
Other	23
TOTAL	296

Male Respondents	179
Female Respondents	100
Not Specified	17
TOTAL	296

The Diamondback presented the greatest source of information about the Convocation to all respondents except Alumni. Alumni received information from friends and other sources (89%). Juniors relied most on Diamondback, (91%) contrasted with 62% of Grad students who reported Diamondback as their best source.

Most of the respondents came to the Convocation to explore career opportunities. 70% of the Freshmen and 48% of the Sophomores were interested in summer jobs.

Over 50% of respondents felt that the Convocation was either very"worthwhile"or"worthwhile." Seniors (28%) and Grad students (30%) appear to show more dissatisfaction than other respondents by stating that the Convocation was either "unworthwhile" or "very unworthwhile." Juniors appear to have been most satisfied with Convocation by 68% response in the "very worthwhile" and "worthwhile categories.

	Grad. %	Sr. %	Jr. %	Soph. %	Fresh. %
Very Worthwhile	15	9	7	19	5
Worthwhile	44	52	61	38	47
No Opinion	11	9	12	27	24
Unworthwhile	30	23	18	16	24
Very Unworthwhile	0	5	2	0	0

The most attractive feature, as viewed by all respondents, of the Convocation was its "informality" with "talking to many representatives" as second in importance.

The most unattractive feature of the Convocation as viewed by all respondents was its limited representation. 55% of Grad students viewed this as the Convocation's greatest flaw. The second feature that most of the respondents viewed as needing revision was the physical arrangement of the Convocation. 59% of Sophomores saw this aspect as the greatest short coming. 21% of the Seniors saw "lack of job opportunities" as the least attractive feature of the Convocation.

Over 60% of the respondents looked at over seven employers' displays and literature. Over 70% of the respondents actually spoke with from one to six employers. There were a total of 70 companies represented.

The companies that students spent most time speaking with were:

(1) Armed Forces - 22 responses - (including - Marine, Army AF, Navy)

(2) Procter & Gamble - 17 responses

(3) Aetna Casualty -
Blue Cross - Blue Shield -
I.B.M.
N.I.H.
N.A.S.A.
10 responses each

Out of 296 respondents, 134 stated they made use of Placement Services. Of the 134 Placement users, 112 or 84% found its services useful. The 15 Seniors reported that they did not find Placement useful though none of these 15 respondents cited suggestions for improvement.

	Grad.	Sr.	Jr.	Sopn.	Fresh.	Alum.	TOTAL
# Used Placement	18	86	21	4	2	3	134
# Found it useful	17	71	17	3	1	3	112

A majority of Grad and Seniors said their next step was to find a job. 26% of the Juniors said they were interested in Graduate School.

40% of the Grad, Juniors and Seniors sampled report they are "quite certain" about vocational goal. Freshmen showed greatest uncertainty about the future by responding 48% for the combination of the "no specific goal at present" and "quite uncertain" categories. Sophomores and Grad students each responded 28% for the same two categories.

Seniors appear to be most certain by responding 60% for the combination of "quite certain" and "clearly fixed vocational goal" categories.

	Grad. %	Sr. %	Jr. %	Soph. %	Fresh. %
A. No specific goal	3	8	4	16	19
B. Quite uncertain	25	15	12	12	29
C. Somewhat uncertain	25	33	31	24	9
D. Quite certain	40	33	40	40	29
E. Clearly fixed Voc. goal	7	11	11	8	14

45% of the seniors expressed some degree of vocational uncertainty on the Student Census contrasted with 56% of this survey. It would be expected that because of the nature of the program, a greater percent of seniors would express vocational uncertainty.

IMPLICATIONS

Building a successful career convocation program necessitates knowledge of its participants and their expectations of the program. This evaluation provided Placement Services with the above characterized information.

As a result of the findings, it is recommended that future convocations maintain its informal nature, but revise its physical arrangement and company representation. It appears that there should be a greater representation in the liberal arts and social service areas. An attempt should be made to arrange the companies in a more efficient and convenient manner.

It is further recommended that future surveys be taken to keep current on changing student attitudes and job market needs. Because this program provides the Placement Services with its greatest exposure to students, the survey should be given to as many who are in attendance as possible.

Appendix A

TOTAL IN SAMPLE — 296

COLLEGE	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH.		ALUMNI		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
A & S	10	36	48	35	25	33	9	34	9	43	4	44	105
Agr.	0	0	2	1	2	3	1	4	2	10	0	0	7
BPA	12	43	65	47	34	45	7	27	3	14	5	56	126
Educ.	5	18	12	9	10	13	3	12	5	24	0	0	35
Other	1	3	10	8	4	5	6	23	2	10	0	0	23
TOTAL	28	100	137	100	75	100	26	100	21	100	9	100	296
Male	23	82	85	62	48	64	8	31	8	38	7	78	179
Female	5	18	46	34	23	31	14	54	10	48	2	22	100
Not Specified	0	0	6	4	4	5	4	15	3	14	0	0	17
TOTAL	28	100	137	100	75	100	26	100	21	100	9	100	296

	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH.		ALUMNI		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 1													
How did you hear about the Career Convocation?													
A. Friends	6	19	24	21	6	8	5	16	3	12	6	67	50
B. Diamondback	20	62	80	70	67	91	25	78	21	88	1	11	214
C. Faculty or Administration	3	9	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
D. Other	3	9	6	5	1	1	2	6	0	0	2	22	14
TOTAL RESPONSES	32	99	115	100	74	100	32	100	24	100	9	100	286
Omitted Responses = 10													
# 2													
The reason I came to the Convocation was to find out about —													
A. Summer Employment	3	11	9	7	20	33	13	48	14	70	0	0	59
B. Career opportunities (interests)	14	50	71	57	29	48	13	48	1	5	0	0	128
C. Jobs available now	8	29	45	36	7	11	0	0	4	20	8	100	72
D. Armed Service information	0	0	0	0	4	7	1	4	1	5	0	0	6
E. Government jobs	3	11	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
TOTAL RESPONSES	28	101	125	100	61	100	27	100	20	100	8	100	269
Omitted Responses = 17													

	GRAD		CENTR		DON		OPH		REST		COM		TOT
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 3													
On the whole, the Convocation was —													
A. Very worthwhile	4	15	12	9	5	7	5	19	1	5	2	22	29
B. Worthwhile	12	44	74	52	45	61	10	38	10	47	3	33	154
C. No opinion	3	11	12	9	9	12	7	27	5	24	1	11	37
D. Unworthwhile	8	30	32	23	13	18	4	16	5	24	3	33	65
E. Very Unworthwhile	0	0	7	5	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
TOTAL RESPONSES	27	100	137	100	74	100	26	100	21	100	9	99	294
Omitted Responses = 2													
# 4													
What I like most about the Convocation was —													
A. Talking with different representatives informally	2	12	17	23	13	43	4	29	2	33	2	33	40
B. Friendliness of representatives	11	65	25	34	13	43	7	50	0	0	4	66	60
C. Not crowded	1	6	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
D. Ice Cream	1	6	4	5	2	7	3	21	1	17	0	0	11
E. Get Info	1	6	14	19	0	0	0	0	2	33	0	0	17
F. Summer Employment	1	6	2	3	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
G. Non-Technical	0	0	9	12	1	3	0	0	1	17	0	0	11
TOTAL RESPONSES	17	101	74	100	30	99	14	100	6	100	6	99	147
Omitted Responses = 149													

	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH		ALUMNI		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 5													
What I liked least about the Convocation was —													
A. Limited representatives	11	55	17	29	15	35	0	0	1	10	2	40	46
B. Limited Summer	2	10	3	5	9	21	5	29	2	20	0	0	21
C. Poor physical set-up (guides, confusion)	7	35	16	28	10	23	10	59	2	20	2	40	47
D. Not interested in Women	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	12	2	20	0	0	6
E. Recruiters lack of interest or knowledge	0	0	8	14	1	2	0	0	1	10	1	20	11
F. No Jobs (Opportunities)	0	0	12	21	0	0	0	0	2	20	0	0	14
G. Military Recruiters	0	0	0	0	8	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
TOTAL RESPONSES	20	100	58	100	43	99	17	100	10	100	5	100	153

Omitted responses = 143

	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH		ALUMN.		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 6 How many employers' displays and literature did you just look at? (70 employers in attendance)													
1 - 3	7	26	25	20	10	15	2	10	3	15	0	0	47
4 - 6	3	11	23	19	12	18	6	32	4	20	0	0	48
7 - 10	8	30	53	43	15	22	2	10	3	15	3	33	84
Over 10	9	33	21	17	31	46	9	47	10	50	6	66	86
TOTAL RESPONSES	27	100	122	99	68	101	19	99	20	100	9	99	265
Omitted responses = 31													
# 7 With how many employers did you actually speak?													
1 - 3	9	33	50	39	25	37	5	21	9	50	2	22	100
4 - 6	12	44	46	35	32	47	12	56	6	33	4	44	112
7 - 10	4	15	19	15	11	16	5	21	1	6	2	22	42
Over 10	2	8	15	11	0	0	1	2	2	11	1	11	21
TOTAL RESPONSES	27	100	130	100	68	100	23	100	18	100	9	99	275
Omitted responses = 21													

8 - Is a combination of All respondents

Aetna	10
American Foresight	2
Armed Forces	22
Army Auditing Agency	2
Arthur Anderson	5
Baltimore Company	2
Baltimore DSS	3
Blue Cross & Blue Shield	10
Camerlite Brothers	2
Camp Fire Girls	4
Camp Rappatak	2
Central Soya	3
Coop. Extension	3
Defense Supply	2
Del Monte	5
Dept. of Commerce	7
Donnelly	3
Equitable Insurance	6
ESSO	2
GAO	3
Giant Food	2
Girl Scouts	5
Good Humor	8
Grand Union	3
GSA	9
Health State	2
HEW - Census	2
HWM	3
IBM	10
Internal Revenue Service	8
Lybrand	3
Manufacturer Hanover Trust	3
Maryland Dept. of Probation	5
Maryland State	8
1st National Bank	4
National Center of Health Statistics	2
NIH	10
NASA	10
Northwest & Mutual	2
Ortho	7
Owens Corning	3
Pan Am	7
Peace Corps	8
Procter & Gamble	17
Red Cross	2
Safeway	2
So. Railroads	8
State Farm	6
Stoy	2
Suburban	5
Trinity Mission	1
Union Carbide	3
Vista	8
Washington Gas	3

TOTAL # of Responses	279
TOTAL # of Companies	54
Omitted responses	17

Appendix G	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH		ALUMNI		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 9													
Please give COMMENTS and SUGGESTIONS to help us improve the Convocation —													
Change physical layout	3		14		4		0		0		0		21
Better representatives	7		29		12		5		2		3		58
More advanced publicity (directory)	2		0		0		1		0		1		4
More organized	1		6		0		1		0		0		8
More recruiter help	1		4		0		0		0		0		5
More job opportunities	0		2		0		2		2		0		6
More Summer	0		3		5		0		1		0		9
TOTAL	14		58		21		9		5		4		111
Omitted responses = 185													

Appendix

	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH		ALUMNI		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 10													
Have you ever used the Placement Services?													
Placement Use YES	18		86		21		4		2		3		134
Useful - YES	17		71		17		3		1		3		112
Useful - NO	1		15		4		1		1		0		22
Improve Convocation	1												1
Provide Contact with Companies other than interviewing program													
More open to Alumni	1												1
More specific job descriptions	1												1
More Summer							1						1
Change location							1						1

Appendix I	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH		ALUMNI		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 11 - Multiple Response Question What is your next step in your career plans?													
Find a job	14	58	64	56	6	12	0	0	0	0	5	71	89
Government Work	1	5	3	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5
Grad School	3	12	10	9	13	26	3	22	0	0	1	15	30
Placement	2	8	11	9	3	6	0	0	0	0	1	15	17
Finish College	0	0	14	12	21	42	10	72	7	88	0	0	52
Summer	0	0	0	0	2	4	1	6	1	12	0	0	4
Military	0	0	9	8	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
Don't Know	4	17	3	3	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	10
TOTAL RESPONSES	24	100	144	100	50	100	14	100	8	100	7	101	217

	GRAD		SENIOR		JUNIOR		SOPH.		FRESH		UMN		TOTAL
	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	# Rsp.	%	
# 12 How certain are you of your vocational goal at this time?													
A. No specific goal at present	1	3	12	8	3	4	4	16	4	19	1	11	25
B. Quite Uncertain	7	25	21	15	9	12	3	12	6	29	3	33	49
C. Somewhat Uncertain	7	25	44	33	23	31	6	24	2	9	2	22	84
D. Quite Certain	11	40	44	33	29	40	10	40	6	29	2	22	102
E. Clearly fixed Vocational Goal	2	7	16	11	8	11	2	8	3	14	1	11	32
TOTAL RESPONSES	28	100	137	100	72	98	25	100	21	100	9	99	292

Omitted responses = 4

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
Placement and Credentials Services
Cumberland Hall Basement

February 17, 1970

SURVEY OF NON-TECHNICAL CAREER CONVOCATION

KINDLY HELP US TO LEARN HOW EFFECTIVE THIS CONVOCATION HAS BEEN IN SERVING YOUR JOB NEEDS BY RESPONDING TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

CLASS:
___Freshman ___Senior
___Sophomore ___Grad Student
___Junior

SEX:
___Male
___Female

COLLEGE: _____

MAJOR: _____

FIELD I PLAN TO WORK IN: _____

1. How did you hear about the Career Convocation? Please circle appropriate response.
   (a) Friends (b) Diamondback (c) Faculty or Administrators
   (d) Other, Please specify _____

2. The reason I came to the Convocation was to find out about _____
   _____

3. On the whole, the Convocation was (a) very worthwhile, (b) worthwhile, (c) no opinion, (d) unworthwhile, (e) very worthwhile

4. What I like most about the Convocation was _____
   _____

5. What I liked least about the Convocation was _____
   _____

6. How many employers' displays and literature did you just look at? _____

7. With how many employers did you actually speak? _____

8. With which company did you spend most time speaking? _____

9. Please give COMMENTS and SUGGESTIONS to help us improve the Convocation _____
   _____
   _____

10. Have you ever used the Placement Services? ___Yes ___No
    If YES--Did you find it useful? ___Yes ___No
    Suggestions for improving service _____

11. What is your next step in your career plans? _____
    _____

12. How certain are you of your vocational goal at this time.
    (a) no specific goal at present
    (b) quite uncertain
    (c) somewhat uncertain
    (d) quite certain
    (e) clearly fixed vocational goal